



# University of Hawaii at Manoa

Environmental Center  
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822  
Telephone (808) 948-7361

Office of the Director

RL:0254

SR 414 and SCR 156  
REQUESTING APPROVAL TO EXTEND  
CERTAIN POLLUTION DISCHARGE PERMITS

Statement for  
Senate Committee on Ecology, Environment and Recreation  
Public Hearing 13 April 1977

by  
Doak C. Cox, Environmental Center  
L. Stephen Lau, Water Resources Research Center  
Michael Chun, School of Public Health

SR 414 and SCR 156 would request the U.S. Congress to provide the means to extend certain National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits beyond the deadline now set by federal law. This statement is being submitted to the Legislative Subcommittee of the Environmental Center of the University of Hawaii. It does not represent an institutional position of the University.

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System was set up under the Water Quality Act Amendments of 1972, PL 92-500. In many respects, this extraordinarily complex piece of legislation unwisely fixes in law details as to water quality criteria and standards that would be better established through regulations, and makes requirements that are uniform nationwide in spite of great regional differences in environmental conditions.

The misfit of the requirements of PL 92-500 to local environmental conditions is probably greater in Hawaii than any other state, simply because, in their tropical oceanic setting, the islands of Hawaii differ most from the temperate continental conditions of most of the states.

A particular misfit is the requirement for secondary treatment of certain municipal discharges that from both environmental and economic standpoints should be better discharged at depth, offshore, with only primary treatment. It is particularly to request a relaxation of this requirement or at least the deadline by which it must be met that is the purpose of SR 414 and SCR 156. The rationale expressed in the resolutions is sound, and the request is appropriate.